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A PHILOSOPHER LOOKS AT THE CURRENT VALUES AND CHANGING NEEDS OF YOUTH. FINAL DRAFT.

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THE MAJOR PRESMISES OF EDUCATION AND OTHER ENTERPRISES, WHICH ARE OFTEN NOT ARTICULATED, CONCERN THE PROBLEM OF THE MEANING, SOURCE AND IMPACT OF VALUES. EXAMPLES OF VALUE CONFLICT AND CONFUSION ARE NATIONALISM VERSUS INTERNATIONALISM, RELIGION IN THE CURRICULUM, AND SEX VALUES IN EDUCATION. THE PROPOSED AGENDA FOR THE ENTIRE EDUCATIVE PROCESS, INCLUDING ADULT EDUCATION AND EDUCATION TAKING PLACE OUTSIDE SCHOOL SETTINGS, CENTERS ON 1) FACING THE CONTROVERSIAL (DEALING WITH ALL VALUES), 2) SEEKING NORMATIVE CONSENSUS (BASED ON THE DESCRIPTIVE STUDIES OF VALUES), 3) HELPING YOUTH MOVE TOWARD SOCIAL, SELF REALIZATION (MAXIMIZING INDIVIDUAL POTENTIAL IN RELATIONSHIP TO MANKIND AS A WHOLE), 4) OVERHAULING THE CURRICULUM (BASED ON MAN IN HIS CULTURE), 5) USING INVOLVEMENT AS METHODOLOGY (ACTIVE PARTICIPATION IN PLANNING AND EXPERIENCING), AND 6) TEACHING THE PHILOSOPHY OF VALUES. REACTIONS TO THE PRESENTATION ARE GIVEN. THIS SPEECH WAS PRESENTED AT THE CONFERENCE ON YOUTH (MERIDEN, CONN., APRIL 26-27, 1966). (JH)

(Final Draft)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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The Current Values and Changing Needs of Youth

.. REPORT

OF THE

CONFERENCE ON YOUTH

Conducted by the

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The State Commission on Youth Services

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(Final Draft)

Introduction of Dr. Theodore Brameld

William H. Flaharty, Deputy Commissioner of Education

It is my pleasure to introduce at this time our speaker of the morning, Dr. Theodore Brameld, who is professor of Philosophy of Education at Boston University, having received his Ph. D. at the University of Chicago and having been on the staffs of such universities and colleges as Long Island University, Adelphi College, and New York University.

He is the author of numerous articles and many books. Some of the titles of his books are: "Ends and Means in Education", A Mid-Century Appraisal", "Patterns of Educational Philosophy", "Toward a Reconstructed Philosophy of Education", "The Cultural Foundations of Education - An Interdisciplinary Explanation", and "Education for the Emerging Age".

I am very pleased to present at this time Dr. Brameld of Boston University.

(Final Draft)

Theodore Brameld

A Philosopher Looks at

The Current Values and Changing Needs of Youth

Mr. Chairman, Colleagues, Interrogators. I approach my part in this conference with some trepidation, being aware of the high standards that must have been established by preceding speakers. Particularly I have known Professor Havighurst and Professor Montagu for a long time, and I am sure that they have set the stage for much of what I would like to say. One of the main differences between these gentlemen and myself, however, is that while they are specialists in social psychology and anthropology, respectively, I am merely a specialist in non-specialization. One of the roles of the philosopher is to try to look large and wide and deep at life, and to try to develop some position toward the whole. Inevitably, in attempting such a task in so brief a time, one is going to be superficial and to over - simplify. For this reason, I welcome opportunity for discussion, so that at least some of the gaping holes in my presentation may be filled.

VALUE PREMISES

Let me attempt, nevertheless, to approach the very important problems of this conference in wide perspective. In accordance with another traditional role of the philosopher, we begin with a set of premises. Indeed, some people define philosophy as that discipline concerned to examine and enunciate the "inarticulate major premises" upon which education and all other enterprises of life rest.

First premise: the problem of values is central. The question of the meaning of values, where they come from, and what their impact may be upon life is, in a very real sense, the most difficult and at the same time the most central question that might be asked, not only in this conference but in the subsequent conferences which you are planning.

Another premise: values permeate all aspects of human existence. They are not limited just to a narrow sphere - - for instance, to the personal or the psychological - - but they permeate every dimension of individual or social life.

Still another premise: these dimensions of life which values embrace may be seen in a series of institutions which embrace what might be called, in turn, the major areas of human existence. There are various ways to describe such dimensions, but I suggest seven or eight. You can think of them, if you wish, in a series of concentric circles from the wider to the narrower, but with much overlapping among the circles. They are: politics, economics, science, art, recreation, religion, the family, and, last but not least, education itself. Within each one of these concentric circles we find deeply implicit and to some extend explicit valuational dimensions or (as some anthropoligists prefer to call them) value orientations. In any case, not a single one of these great circles of life is immune to curcial problems of value.

COMPLEXITY GENERATES CONFUSION

Next premise: not only is each great institution permeated with value but, in our day at least, each one of them is permeated with profound complexities. Not a single one, from politics to the family and education, is devoid of controversy, cross-purposes, confusion. Indeed, the whole of life today is more profoundly controversial than it has been perhaps at any time in the history of the human race. We know some of the reasons for this situation, but I am not sure that we have sufficiently explored any of them. I do want to reiterate one that, no doubt, has already been mentioned at least once or twice in this conference: in the last twenty-five to thirty-five years we have literally accumulated more knowledge concerning the universe and man's place in it than we accumulated in the entire preceding 5,000 years or more of human history. Surely this alone is sufficient reason to contend that when such a torrential accumulation of knowledge pours down upon us, we are bound to lose our bearings, to be overwhelmed by the meaning of the knowledge explosion.

Next premise: not only is the revolutionary knowledge that is generated within each of these dimensions of human existence burdened with conflict, but the causes of this conflict are multiple. They are so multiple and so difficult that no one, were he anything but totally presumptuous, could claim to understand them fully. We could spend this whole conference and many more besides simply trying to grasp why the confusions, cross-purposes, and disturbances that are chronic to our age have occurred.

Here I wish merely to illustrate. Though by no means in itself a sufficient cause (for there are many causes behind this cause) I refer to the highly fruitful concept in social psychology called the frustration-aggression complex -- a concept which, since its original formulation, has itself undergone a good deal of refinement. In some of my own field research, to which I shall refer later, I have found the complementary bi-polar reaction of frustration causing aggression, and aggression in turn causing more frustration, to be one of the most fruitful of all explanations of why we are in the muddle we are. Or, focusing more directly on young people, it may be argued that if we are to interpret the issues of special concern to this conference - - the lost bearings, the alienations, the anomie - - from which so many youngsters are suffering today, then we shall have to utilize such fruitful operational concepts as the frustration-aggression complex much more extensively than we have thus far. Young people frequently <u>are</u> frustrated today. Therefore in turn they often tend to be aggressive; their frustrations must somehow or other find an outlet. Juvenile delinquency, for example, surely is in part at least attributable to the fact that the alienated young person often discovers no release for his frustrations other than anti-social behavior. And this behavior in turn feeds upon all the confusions and bewilderments to which I have referred.

One or two more premises, please. Education, one of the great institutions in our simple model and surely by no means the last important certainly for us here, has a responsibility - - a sacred responsibility if you wish - - to

every one of the other institutions embraced by the concentric circles. To say that education does not have a responsibility to one or another of them is to confess that education does not recognize its responsibility to the whole of life, to the totality of mankind, and to all of mankind's problems. The moment, therefore, that we start placing taboos upon this or that institution, we at this point truncate our responsibility. It follows that education, because of its responsibility to each of the great institutions of culture, is properly concerned from top to bottom with problems of value themselves.

DESCRIPTION OF VALUES

But here permit me to be just a little technical philosophically. We cannot really communicate very well without the use of one simple but fundamental distinction. This is the distinction between "descriptive" and "normative" values. To describe values is simple to say, as a sociologist or psychologist might, "Here are the values that people have. Here are the value patterns that boys and girls in Connecticut accept." This kind of descriptive investigation of values is, of course, necessary in any kind of effective approach to value problems. Indeed, thorough research regarding the value patterns, implicit and explicit, held by people within the various institutions is one of the most compelling needs confronting us today. Yet, to a great extent, even the descriptive study of values has been by-passed by the scientists of man, the behavioral scientists. Not wholly, of course. Values are too ubiquitous to life to avoid them entirely. Nevertheless, to an extraordinary and in my view shocking extent such behavorial scientists as the psychologists, the sociologists, and political scientists have avoided, or at least skirted, the factors of value which are central to every one of the major institutions of culture. The descriptive study of values within cultures, and also between cultures through what is called cross-cultural research, becomes one of most imperative and yet neglected of all imperatives. I hope, Mr. Chairman, that I do not appear presumptuous in suggesting therefore that one of the tasks you could undertake in your program is the scientific exploration of value patterns held by young people in this part of the United States, together with some comparisons with value patterns of young people in other parts of the world. To do this descriptively with the help of social scientists could, it seems to me, prove of great importance to your endeavors.

NORMATIVE ASPECTS OF VALUE

One final premise relates to the others but deserves, I think, even more extended attention. In my view, education to a very great extent is failing in its concern for the valuational aspects of the major institutions which are included in the model of concentric circles. It follows that education is also failing much too often to distinguish between or to manifest direct, explicit, systematic, patient concern for the two major phases of value - - the descriptive and the normative. It would be foolish, of course, to generalize without qualifications. Many individual teachers - - mostly unheralded, unsung - - are deeply concerned with the values of their children, concerned both descriptively and normatively. By and large, nevertheless, I do not find that American educators - - or for that matter the educators of other countries where I have studied - - are in any adequate way directing themselves to the crucial issues that the valuational dimensions of the institutions of human life now generate.

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Let me come back, then, to these several institutions which were merely named and try to exemplify what may be meant by the contention that each of them is fraught with conflict and confusion. We could spend a great many hours discussing the extent and the nature of these conflicts. I must be very selective, however, since what I wish to emphasize most this morning is some suggestions by way of an agenda for coping with the disturbances in value patterns that are chronic in our culture.

NATIONALISM OR INTERNATIONALISM AS VALUE

Take first the area of politics. I am not referring at the moment to internal political conflicts within the United States, though they are severe enough, but to the profound implications of value involved in the issue of nationalism versus internationalism. Now it is true that our schools sometimes talk about internationalism. Many have a "United Nations Day" and others try in their curriculums to help youngsters become more or less aware of international and intercultural relations. By and large, nevertheless, all the evidence that I have seen points towards the conclusion that many young people find themselves threatened by a kind of political schizophrenia with regard to whether their primary loyalty should lie with the country in which they live or with some kind of trans-national loyalty - - loyalty, moreover, not merely to the United Nations perhaps, but to a world system of democracies organized, let us say, in the way that the World Federalists propose. Therefore, what we in education are doing is, in effect, to bring up a generation of young people who often become bewildered over where their ultimate allegiance should really lie. One of the tasks confronting us here is to help youngsters think through the profundity of the dilemma involved in national loyalty, on one hand, and international loyalty, on the other.

Can we have both at the same time? Can one be a devoted citizen of America and also a citizen of mankind? Probably so, but I fear that our schools are doing very little to help youngsters think through these questions. Yet unless they are thought through, you and I know that we are likely to be heading towards the most terrible kind of trouble in the mere 34 years left before the year 2000. Therefore, instead of pushing problems of nationalism and internationalism over to the edge of the curriculum, instead of allowing a little study of "world history" (which is usually history limited to the Western World), should we not consider taking something out of the curriculum in order to put this in? I frequently meet superintendents of schools and principals who say, "Oh, some of your ideas may be all right, but we simply don't have room." Well, here too is a problem of values, is it not? The crucial question is what is <u>most important</u> to the lives of young people. Everything cannot be equally important. Just to generate a little discussion, I would be glad indeed to advocate the abolition of 25% to 50% of the present junior and senior high-school curriculum in order to replace it with problems that are vastly more vital and relevant to human beings today than are many conventional courses. Internationalism is surely one of these problems.

RELIGION AS VALUE IN CURRICULUM

Consider another example. You and I know perfectly well that religion has played and continues to play one of the most powerful roles in the history of mankind. And yet, because of our tradition of the separation of church and

state, our schools have been understandingly reluctant to help young people develop some kind of consistent and mature stance toward the place of religious experience in modern civilization and thus to consider values in the context of the great religions of the world. In 1963, the Supreme Court of the United States ruled that no longer shall there be Bible reading or prayers in the public schools. Yet how many educators have realized that what the Supreme Court actually did was not to slam the door upon the study of religion but to open it - - to open it, however, neither in the traditional manner of indoctrinating the particular authoritative sources of one religion, not in order to require prayers reflecting the creed of only one religion, but so as to treat religion as a great area for critical inquiry in the same way that we should treat any other important area of life. The opportunity to help young people, rethink their values towards religion, not in a sectarian way but as a tremendous world institution embracing not merely Christianity or Judiasm but Buddhism, Mohammedanism, humanism and other non-theistic views of religion as well as theistic views, is an opportunity which, so far as I know, the schools have almost totally avoided.

SEX VALUES IN EDUCATION

Let me take one other instance - - this from the innermost circle of institutions. Of course, we all know without further argument that the family has been undergoing a revolution in itself. We all know that the customary patterns of family living have radically changed under the development of technology and urbanism. We also know that profound changes are consequently taking place in regard to relations of the sexes. Yet, just as religion remains to a great extent a taboo subject in the schools, just as free controversy involving thorough examination, for example, of the meaning of Communism, is frequently avoided or soft pedalled in the public schools, so too, are the issues generated by what may well be called the sexual revolution. Now, when we ask the question of what is, after all, the responsibility of education, and if we reply that education is to limit itself only to matters so innocuous that they never disturb any of the pressure groups that are constantly on the doorstep of the schools; if in short, we say that we had better avoid controversy and play it safe - - then of course we are going to deal with problems of sexual morality.

Certainly none of my colleagues here this morning will disagree with me that children are still learning, however. They are learning about sex almost every day in the week. All of us did too. But the question is, what kind of learning is taking place? Here I am reminded of a fruitful term that John Dewey insightfully used - - the term "miseducative learning." There are many kinds of learning, some of which are constructive, intelligent, rational, and some of which are destructive, ignorant, irrational. To a great extent the schools have abrogated their responsibility to the often agonizing conflicts generated by the revolution in sexual morality; therefore, by default, they have supported miseducative learning on the part of the young toward this central aspect of human life.

We might as well face the fact that we educators are to a great extent human ostriches. We are very much like some educators I met in Japan last year. When I asked them why they usually avoid the distressing problems of their own minority groups (which they have, by the way), the answer I heard over and over

was a Japanese term fure nai. And when I asked my interpreter, "What is this term, fure nai?" he answered that it means "don't touch." This is exactly the attitude that many principals had toward the touchy question of "untouchables" in Japan, but I wonder if this is not also our attitude too frequently in American education. Sweep it under the rug, don't touch, fure nai - - somebody might object. As long as we react in this way, I do not conceive how it is possible for any dedicated group of educators and laymen to fulfill their obligations to the value conflicts and dilemmas that confront the last third of the Twentieth Century.

A PROPOSED AGENDA FOR EDUCATION

Now may I submit for your critical reactions an agenda - - a prognostic agenda, if you please - - for the schools of America? By the "schools" I really mean not merely formal institutions but the entire educative process, including adult education such as the kinds occurring in, say, labor unions, churches, minority group organizations, and in others represented at this conference. In a broad cultural sense how might the "schools" tackle some of the controversies about value that pervade our age?

1. FACING THE CONTROVERSIAL

The kind of education that is willing to deal with all areas of value, not just some of them, will thereby recognize that each one of the several spheres or institutions of human life is the responsibility of education, beginning with the kindergarten and extending through the college and university. These great concentric areas of human life thereby become the crucial subject matter, if you wish, of the curriculum — both the formal curriculum and the informal learnings of extra-curricular and community programs. I re-emphasize that each one of these areas is thoroughly controversial. Nothing significant involving human life today is non-controversial. Indeed, I defy you to think of any single area of knowledge, even the so-called quantitative sciences such as physics and chemistry, that is not now profoundly debatable - - debatable in the sense that the knowledge explosion has forced us to re-examine our old models, all the way from the Newtonian model in traditional physics to the outmoded family patterns suitable to an agrarian age. No matter where you point your finger, life and the universe itself are replete with questioning. And this means, in turn, not only that all education must itself constantly raise questions but that the controversial attitude toward life itself needs to be encouraged from the earliest years. The purpose is not, of course, to develop mere skeptics, nor is it to intensify the already contagious disease of alienation. The purpose, rather, is to help young people face the world as it actually is - - a world of controversy through which, and only through which, they may then be able to move toward resolution of controversy in terms of a constructive, positive, and mature way of life.

2. SEEKING NORMATIVE CONSENSUS

The preceding remarks lead to the next point on my brief agenda. How can we move from study of the controversial nature of human life to critical study of the valuational dimensions of life that are at once descriptive and normative? The descriptive level is much easier in one way, of course. Few people complain if, for example, an anthropologist enters a particular culture and studies its valuational patterns objectively. But anthropologists themselves often begin to cringe whenever some one attempts to infer normative judgments

from their descriptive studies. Most social scientists try to avoid normative value judgments.

Please remember, however, that I am not primarily a social scientist but a so-called philosopher. Hence it is less difficult for me to insist that we in education, at least, cannot possibly avoid moving from the descriptive study of values toward the search for consensus on normative levels. But how is it possible to move toward normative consensus? This is a very tough question, and I do not pretend to have conclusive answers. It is possible only to touch upon one or two approaches.

Certainly we cannot develop any normative consensus regarding values until we have built a strong foundation in descriptive values. I come back, therefore, to the urgent need for more descriptive research in the nature of the value patterns and value conflicts that are as prevalent, I dare say, in the communities of Connecticut as they are anywhere else in the world. As we study value patterns descriptively, are we then able to move more securely beyond such studies toward normative consensuses? I think that the answer is yes. Please think only of a few of the abundant resources out of which such an aim might be approached. May I pay tribute to Ashley Montagu as one who has contributed, I am sure that his address radiated with norms, but these were far from arbitrary; they have emerged from long descriptive understanding of human beings. One could mention other behavorial scientists, such as Abraham Maslow, the social psychologist, who has gathered impressive scientific evidence to show that the core of the healthy human being is what he calls self-actualizing, self-fulfulling experience. Notice how Maslow thereby moves from descriptive to normative judgments which yet are grounded in scientific research. Gordon Allport, with his vast erudition coming to focus in the concept of "becoming" is another social psychologist who should be mentioned here, and you could think of still others.

SOCIAL-SELF-REALIZATION

Out of such scholarship and research I would like to submit a term that I have found fruitful as encapsulating the normative direction in which we should be moving as educators and toward which we ought vigorously to be helping young people move. Notice that I say, ought to - - that is, to affirm normative judgments. The term that I have found most useful here is social-self-realization. It is an awkward term, but it is necessary in order to counterbalance the implication in scholars like Maslow who often seem to underweigh the social dimension. Self-actualization is, after all, a psychological concept and it is inadequate without equal concern for socialactualization. For this reason the norms that should now be sought and developed are completely bi-polar. Of course, they involve us as individual beings who seek the flowering of our own personalities. But equally they involve us as integrally related socially to other human beings in collective arrangements that extend from the family all the way out to the periphery of racial, religious, and political institutions that are eventually planetary in scope.

The bi-polar concept of social-self-realization, which merely symbolizes the maximizing of the potential powers of creativity and fulfillment that the individual person possesses in relationship to mankind as a whole, is, I suggest, a possible way to resolve the dilemma of the descriptive and the normative. Permit me to introduce here the term, commitment. Social-self-relization is, for those who accept it, a commitment. Indeed, it posseses a religious quality. Perhaps until we can find a way to help young people internalize the vital

emotional as well as intellectual meanings of social-self-relization, we are going to suffer as they are suffering from a sense of rootlessness, a sense of alienation, a sense of anomie. The need for commitment, the need to believe in something that is defensible scientifically as well as emotionally and aesthetically, has become imperative.

People often talk today about conformity versus non-conformity. A few years ago I was one of those going around the country complaining about how "conformist" our high-school and college students are. Since the Berkeley "riots", some people are complaining about too much non-conformity. Actually the alternative is neither conformity nor non-conformity but commitment to such a guiding star as social-self-realization - - a normative commitment relevant to peoples of all nations, all races, and all religions, no matter where you find them. To provide depth of meaning for this great encompassing value of social-self-realization and to embody it within institutional arrangements is fundamental to our educational responsibilities. As, moreover, it becomes increasingly meaningful, it provides ample room for an infinite range of opportunities to express one's values in distinctive ways.

3. OVERHAULING THE CURRICULUM

If, however, we are to move from the first point on the agenda, which simply urges us to deal honestly with all areas of controversy, including values, and if we are to move to the second point, to a constructive conception of values which can become our overarching normative goal, then , third, we require a thorough overhauling of the present curriculum of the schools. This is what was implied earlier by the premise that our schools today are failing.

May I appear to be a bit dogmatic here - - perhaps even a little more so than hitherto - - by asserting that if we are willing to consider the contention that man is living in an age of profound crisis which is unique in the history of mankind; if we are willing to conceive even the possibility that no historian may be alive on the earth in the year 2000 to record that event; if we are willing to admit that the revolutions of our time have created controversy about every single one of the institutions of human life - - then we should also be willing to ask whether we are not selling our young people short by insisting upon subjects, grades, other requirements that have no significance and no vitality whatsoever for a large proportion of them. Of course such requirements often do have significance for mothers and fathers who push their children to pass college-entrance examinations. The whole abominable system of "regent's examinations" and of the tyrannical authority that our universities and colleges exercise over the high schools, is a major educational scandal. Until we on the public-school levels learn how to inform the colleges and universities that we simply are not going to be subjected to their rules and regulations anywhere nearly as abjectly as we are today, we cannot hope to break the barriers of rigidity that must presently be faced in order that students can proceed.

I am in favor of the "new math" and the "new Physics" - - yes, of course we need these things, though I very much question the proportion now required - - but I also have a 13 year old daughter in junior high school. As a parent I often wonder to what extent Kristin is actually learning about the kind of world into which she is being inducted. Her "above-average" junior high school is concerned with subjects that guarantee her admission first into senior high school and from there into some prestigious college. Granting that these subjects have certain significance, what do they actually mean to her as a human being

who is entangled in an age of acute controversy - - who is growing up in a time of violent political conflict, of upsetting religious conflict, of revolutionary sexual conflict? To what extent is such an education preparing her to resolve the soul-searching dilemmas of value which she is already beginning to confront at the age of 13?

I fear that the curriculum to which she is being subjected is an immoral curriculum. It is preparing her not to face but to avoid such dilemmas - - such valuational conflicts. Only the first of the controversial areas implicit in our model of concentric institutions receives anything like sustained attention. This is in the institution of politics, and here I am glad to say that her high school is well above average - - in fact, atypical. Yes, there is also a little attention to the arts (and, by the way, I am unable to comment upon the aesthetic confusions of value that the arts of today, from pop art down, are also generating). The bulk of her time, nevertheless, is devoted to the standard subjects of the time-worn "egg crate" curriculum. She goes from one class to another - - from 9 to 10, from 10 to 11 - - and almost no one helps her to discover any possible relationship between each little cubicle of knowledge And so she will graduate from junior high school, and will doubtless graduate from senior high school as well, imbued primarily with one gigantic falsehood: subjects consist of little discrete pieces of knowledge that have almost no discernible relationship either to each other or to the whole of her living environment.

In short, there is very great need for overhauling the typical curriculum. The central theme that should govern that overhauling is the nature of man himself as he confronts the kind of world which is characteristic of the Twentieth Century. Man-in-culture is the thread that should tie together all parts of the curriculum. It makes no difference whether Kristin is studying science, or French, or math - - whatever it may be, she should be in a school where every teacher is more concerned to make sure that his or her particular area is related to all other areas in terms of man-in-culture than to make sure that she will pass her examinations so that she can climb to the next rung of the educational ladder.

No teacher, moreover, who is willing to accept the premises established earlier - - of course not all teachers are willing - - could conscientiously deny his or her responsibility to the challenge I have tried to place before you. It happens that just yesterday I spoke before a teachers' meeting in Rochester. During the question period I was asked: "How can I as a typing teacher be concerned with some of the things you're talking about? I have to teach my kids to write good business letters". Well, surely, a curriculum organized on an organic principle rather than on the egg-crate priniciple would provide opportunities for the typing teacher to work conveniently and profitably with the literature teacher, the social-studies teacher, or the science teacher, so that typing becomes an instrument by which children learn how to express themselves more clearly and effectively in every area of learning. Yet how often, I wonder, does the typing teacher or any teacher prefer to consider her little domain as completely sovereign, with little or no regard for what the children may be learning in other areas?

4. USING INVOLVEMENT AS METHODOLOGY

This point on our agenda has to do with methodology, because if curriculum content is to be revitalized around values, then methodologies of learning must also be revitalized. In this room there are persons who are far more

expert than I could ever be in the area of learning and teaching. Yet I do wish to suggest one methodological principle, (certainly others will occur to you) which I should like to call involvement. This principle has become for me increasingly important; I am convinced that education today, if it is to be concerned centrally with man-in-culture, can get nowhere as long as it remains primarily a verbal enterprise. It has to include vastly more opportunities that are now available for most students and teachers to become involved in man-in-culture. By this I do not mean a trip to the museum once a year. Nor do I mean an occasional field excursion begins in the morning and ends in the afternoon. I mean a continuing program in which each child spends every where from a quarter to a half of the time using and becoming involved in the community as a classroom - - every aspect of the community, moreover, as embraced by everyone of its concentric institutions. Surely you will agree with me that despite a great deal of lip service, we have made very little progress in this direction thus far. I know some of the obstacles. But I also know that there is nothing as exciting and rewarding as the kind of learning that results from direct, involved experience. If we have never learned anything else from Dewey and Kilpatrick, we must have learned this.

I cannot therefore resist the temptation to share with you the fact that I myself happen at this moment to be in an aura of involvement. Only two days ago I returned from a week in Puerto Rico with 16 graduate students who are enrolled in a modest course called Education Anthropology. This course tries to satisfy a personal need of mine but also to practice the meaning of involvement with my students. In other years we have visited cultures as far away as the French Canadian communities of Quebec and the Amish people of Pennsylvania. This year, becoming as immersed in Puerto Rican life even in a brief time has left a deposit of permanent significance for both my students and myself. Such involvement means not talking about experience but having experience. I am convinced that my students, who had previously been reading about Puerto Rican culture for many weeks, are now far more knowledgeable about the nature of that culture than they could possibly have been simply by continuing the kind of verbalized learning that is still so characteristic of our school and college classrooms.

Another kind of involvement that deserves much more discussion than I can provide here is in the need for participative planning on the part of students and on the part of teachers in the educational enterprise. We hear a good deal about this, too. Yet here again, we have scarcely reached the point where we show enough confidence - - really enough confidence - - in young people to give them much chance to consider policies, to help us plan curricula, to revise our methodologies of learning, or to plan field experiences. One of the chief reasons for the rebellion in Berkeley lies precisely here. The other day I received a new volume from the University of California written by a group of its distinguished professors which offers a whole series of proposals for administrative and curriculum reform. Why do you suppose that this report has been prepared? Because the faculty first realized the need and took the initiative? No, it was the students who were primarily responsible. Perhaps some of the discontent from which American students are suffering today could be anticipated and resolved if we were to manifest just a little more faith in their ability to participate in the planning enterprise.

5. TEACHING THE PHILOSOPHY OF VALUES

Let us turn to the final point on my little agenda. Problems of value are not merely empirical problems, because they are also complex philosophical problems.

We cannot afford to talk about values as though we were dealing with simple everyday events. On the contrary, they are among the most difficult of all human experiences. I think here of a story about Albert Einstein. Somebody once said to him, "Professor Einstein, we observe that you often seem very much interested in political questions. Why didn't you ever consider becoming a political scientist?" Einstein was said to have answered, "My friend, political science is far more difficult than physics." And political science is one of the behavorial sciences that is fraught with problems of value.

Just because it is difficult, however, we must also be prepared to cope with the philosophical relations of these value problems. There are two levels on which we can consider values philosophically. First, we can include axiological studies in teacher-training institutions to a far more richer extent than we now do. I would like to see the time come as soon as possible when no teacher will graduate from a college of education without having engaged in systematic examination of some of the issues involved in that branch of philosophy called axiology. It is not impossible to do so at all. It is a matter of making axiology available and of providing teachers in the field who are competent to deal with it.

But value studies need not be limited to the college level. They can be introduced into the public schools as well. Permit me to mention again my recent work in Japan. (And incidentally, is it not about time that we Americans began to realize how much of our education could benefit by what is going on in the education of other countries? Puerto Rico, for instance, is way ahead of us in some forms of education, especially on the adult level, and Japan is way ahead of us in certain other ways, one of which is relevant to the point I am making now). In Japanese schools, children are required to study problems of value from the first grade through high school. Could I describe an example that remains vivid in my memory? There were about 40 junior highschool children in one classroom I visited, all of them organized into small groups. They seemed totally absorbed in their discussions - - not on a high theoretical level, of course, but centering in questions of responsibility. Who, for example, should be responsible for caring for the gardens that the children had grown beautifully in the school yards? And why, after all, <u>should</u> they take responsibility in making certain that the gardens remain beautiful? Aesthetic values thus were implied, too, although moral values were primarily involved. As a result of many such learning experiences, that particular school had accumulated a whole library of case studies having to do with value problems that the children and the parents of their community had been dealing with over the preceding five or more years. Teachers and students from other parts of Japan came to this library to review various case studies which are relevant to their situations.

The point I wish to emphasize is that if this conference is as earnest as I know it is about the problems of values in young people, then we should also recognize that children of various ages themselves need opportunities in the curriculum to deal with problems of value - - not only indirectly, for obviously values indirectly permeate everthing we learn and do - - but directly, deliberately consciously as a systematic part of learning itself. This idea, which may seem strange to most Americans, is an idea which works in Japan. Not perfectly, of course. Japanese educators make many mistakes. Some of them are very conscious, for example, of the danger of indoctrinating the teacher's values or the dominant political party's values. Yet, despite the hazards involved, it is my impression from having looked into this matter reather carefully that the Japanese are twenty

or more years ahead of American schools in the area of value study.

Here then is my five-point agenda. It is an agenda which surely requires a good deal of discussion and doubtless modification. I hope that you will disagree with parts of it. For, after all, there is another kind of involvement that is necessary in dealing with values; this is involvement in controversy on the part of all of us who are citizens. Involvement in this conference is one example. Involvement in the curriculum is one other. And so I conclude by restressing this point in my brief agenda: a methodological key to problems of values among young people is to assure maximum involvement.

AK/vrs
6/13/66

(Final Draft)

Interrogation of Dr. Brameld by:

Samuel L. Witryol, University of Connecticut
Professor of Psychology

It's difficult for me to pose too many specific questions. I'd like to make a few comments and perhaps from these comments some questions will be found by the speaker, who did an excellent job in a difficult area.

As a psychologist, I'm concerned mainly with how one evaluates the consequences of any of the proposals made. I should say, in all honesty, that, after my almost quarter century of psychology, I don't know a thing in psychology which you can take directly to the classroom with assurance. I think that, in our state of knowledge, we can tell you what you did wrong after you've done it, but I'm not sure we can tell you how to anticipate it.

The speaker made some comments on the frustration and aggression hypothesis invented by the "Yale Mafia" about twenty-five years ago. One hesitates to challenge this group, among whom were Neil Miller, former president of the American Psychological Association; Robert Sears, former president of the association; Hubert Mower, John Dollard. They have been challenged, however, in a manner which has great significance for the constructive proposals made by the speaker. Some hard research indicates that other things may happen as a consequence of frustration; that it doesn't automatically lead to aggression but can lead to problem solving.

This is a situation which I had to face a week ago last Monday in trying to propose a conventional grading system to students who had decided that they didn't want any grading system at all. What happens as a consequence of frustration? What past learning has taken place so that you can make predictions about what adults or children or students will do?

In a most significant approach recently to what happens to certain consequences of the so-called frustration-aggression model, Van Dura and Walters suggest that aggression is a function of past experience but subjects have to have had models of aggression. They have to be permitted to aggress and, indeed, they have to get reinforcement from aggression. Juvenile delinquents are very involved in their behavior and they get immense reinforcement for aggressive behavior.

In the current problems at Berkeley (and you had them in your high schools, too, and we're having them right now at the University of Connecticut), the frustrations, it seems to me, are no different than they have been for the past half century, and, I would wager, probably the past half millennium in higher education. What has changed, in addition to the complexity of knowledge available, is the permissiveness; that is, they are allowed to express their aggression. They are encouraged to do so. Indeed we have inveighed against our undergraduate population for at least a decade that they have conformed too much. Now they see other people aggress in the society which surrounds them. They see the acceptability of aggression. How do they meet the complexity of the knowledge available for solving problems with which they are dealing? Too frequently they revert to primitive responses. They regress to one fixed value and ascertain only one value.

The question is, who is to decide what the values should be? Who is to be guided by these values? The further question is, how do you employ this? What techniques do you use for searching out values to be studied in a controversial setting in the classroom without stripping the teacher himself of his values? Thus, I could say that I am for internationalism. Some of you are not. What kind of a job would you do in a classroom? What kind of job would I do? Would we load the dice? Which way is the proper loading?

What Is Self-Actualization?

Another element of values which come up in problem selection comes from the "Harvard" or "Boston Mafia". The work of Maslow and Allport and Jerry Bruner is controversial for the great body of psychologists. Their self-actualization, which is possible only with freedom from great anxiety and deprivation, does not square with our most creative products, which are coming out of anxious, neurosis-ridden people. The question, again, to the psychologist is, is anxiety good or bad? What is the nature of self-actualization? Does it derive from a passive individual, from positive motivation, as Bruner has suggested, or does it derive from nasty, uncomfortable, neurotic anxiety? A very, very difficult problem for us in psychology.

One last comment has to do with the liberal arts professor with respect to modern education: such notions as involvement, such notions as making the curriculum more real. It seems to me we've been through this before - at least thirty years ago. When these notions were suggested by professional professors of education as outgrowths of John Dewey and Kilpatrick, the liberal arts college professors, of which I am one, decried them. They thought the ideas must be wrong because they were being suggested by professors of education. We've come full cycle now. The leaders of the revolt at Berkeley and whatever controversy is taking place in Connecticut now are the humanists, who have typically (typically, that is, for higher education) rediscovered educational problems which are a half century old. That is, we're always the last to know - and the first to tell you - what the essential problems are. I'm not sure that Dewey's notions are any better or any worse now than they were thirty or forty years ago. I am sure, however, that the climate of expression in the United States is much freer and, within that climate for expression, there is much opportunity for students at every level to get involved.

But what are they getting involved in and should we "control", whether it's drugs or grading practices, helping us set the curriculum or juvenile delinquency?

(Final Draft)

Interrogation of Dr. Brameld by

Edmund H. Thorne, Central Connecticut State College
Professor of Education

I don't know whether I can be quite as brief as Dr. Pritzkau. I find myself so completely in agreement with what Dr. Brameld has been advocating this morning that the question that is foremost in my mind grows out of my frustration in knowing how we can implement the ideas that he has proposed. For my own part, he has reinforced my own convictions and stimulated me to an even deeper commitment to try to bring these things about. Some of us may fear that the changes which he has advocated would be too radical, but I am reminded of what my major professor at the University of Michigan said when one of the students expressed a concern about the school's becoming too radical. Said Dr. Moehlman, "Never fear the schools' becoming too radical. As long as they are controlled by the older and more mature people, they will be conservative and change will be slow." I think to some extent this is true. One of the reasons schools cannot depart far from the beaten path - the traditional - is because of the many controls that exist at all levels. Too many people have to approve the change.

If we review our history of education we find that there have always been people who have tried to make a breakthrough to make education more functional in terms of real needs of youth. In recent times there were Dewey and Kilpatrick. The "progressive" education movement offered hope. I remember, too, of being invited to attend a conference with Paul Collier and Ed Bailey in Washington on "life adjustment" education. But progressive education and life adjustment have become nasty words. And then came Sputnik with the opportunity for reforms in education, but to a great extent we have retrogressed. The influence of the Council on Basic Education, the demands of boards of education to "beef up" the curriculum, and the pressure for admission to college have resulted in emphasis on subject matter and learning of facts to pass college board examinations. The climate has been right for change. Innovations are the order of the day. Foundations have subsidized local experimental programs, but if you will analyze most of these projects and their outcomes, they still have not dealt with the basic problems presented by Dr. Brameld.

Most of the innovations have to do with administrative organization and mechanics, not with the basic issues. I don't think you can expect too much help from boards of education and from foundations. The teachers and the teaching profession should be exercising more leadership along these lines. In Connecticut, they now have Public Act 298 dealing with negotiations with boards of education. Most of the negotiable items have to do with welfare, salaries, tenure, fringe benefits and, in some cases, the number of professional meetings that can be called by a principal in any one month. Teachers of the state ought to be negotiating for freedom to teach, freedom to break through the lock step system. They should request boards of education for approval to teach about controversial issues. Too often they are afraid to deal with current problems - labor-management, politics, religion. They dare not talk about Communism for fear they will be branded as being Communists. Therefore, Dr. Brameld, my question to you is, "How can we bring about the things you have advocated this morning?"

(Final Draft)

Interrogation of Dr. Brameld by

Philo T. Pritzkau, University of Connecticut
Professor of Education

Dr. Brameld, I, too, appreciated the tremendous presentation that you made this morning. In regard to the belief that all values should be brought into the instructional setting, the learning domain, my question is a straightforward one: What do we do with "the establishment"? Is the whole question of alienation involved? How do we break the stereotype of the school to find greater identity?

(Final Draft)

Dr. Brameld's response to interrogation of Dr. Pritzkau and Dr. Thorne

Surely you don't expect a philosopher, even a would-be philosopher, to answer the question of how you do it. Nevertheless, the gentlemen have asked the question and I'll try to say something about it.

May I say a word in response to Professor Witryol. His brief comments on such hypotheses as the frustration-aggression complex are exactly the kind of help, the kind of analysis and criticism that is desperately needed in bringing the highly complex and controversial aspects of the issues I raised down to the level of more precision. We educators are certainly anything but precise, and the need for experts in areas like psychology and other human sciences, especially, to give precision to our frequently nebulous and vague "gobbledy gook", certainly an occupational disease, is very evident. I, for one, benefited from Dr. Witryol's comments and they made me realize the need of more precision, more awareness of recent research in such concepts as the frustration-aggression complex.

Suggestions for Breakthrough

My other two colleagues asked the same question: How do we effect breakthroughs? I have jotted down three or four suggestions which surely are not novel but may be worth reiterating.

Encourage Dialogue

First, of course, is the thing you're beginning to do right here: to produce, encourage, widen dialogue. When I look over this audience and the list of attendants, I feel that the dialogue is extremely limited here. There are not enough teachers here - and not enough students. Please don't interpret me as being unappreciative of the rationale for the kind of conference you have set up. For a beginning, this is a kick-off and this is probably the way to do it, but may I underscore the very great need to go on from here by including students and parents and teachers in very substantial numbers? And I emphasize students. If we believe what we say about the capacity of young adults to think, to criticize, then let's practice what we believe by including them in our deliberations. This takes a lot of careful planning, I realize. It can't be done on a one-shot basis. You need time. You need workshops that extend over weeks so that the xenophobia that separates the young from the old can be reduced to a point where young men and young women of eighteen and nineteen begin to realize that they are, in some very real way, the equals of older people.

In my Japanese research, one thing that I'm glad I did was to include among my interviews, that went on over a whole year's time, high school and junior high school students, who were selected democractically by their classes. In looking over my notes recently, I was impressed all over again by the enormous amount of wisdom and maturity that I found in students aged sixteen or seventeen. Indeed, I sometimes learned much more from them about the nature of Japanese education than I learned from the ideological apologists, from the administrators, or from the representatives of the Ministry of Education. Without the students, I could not claim to have anything like the authoritative picture of Japanese culture and education that I hope I may eventually claim. If it's true in Japan, it's true here. We need to include students in deliberations of this kind, not just as lip service but on a much more extensive and equalitarian basis than has been typical. I remember one conference at Boston University two or three years ago on problems of youth. There must have been five hundred people there and not one below the age of twenty or twenty-five. This seemed to me, to say the least, ironic. So dialogue, then, much wider, more extensive, over longer periods of time would be one suggestion I would make.

Experiment With School-College Cooperation

Second, I would suggest that the time has come for another eight-year study. You remember the famous eight-year study of twenty years ago or more which included thirty schools, private and public, and which included also the cooperation of virtually all the leading colleges and universities in America. In that experiment, the thirty schools were given a free hand to experiment as they wished with their curriculum, to graduate their students as they wished, paired with students of conventional schools, with the assurance that the students in the experiment would be admitted to college. At the end of four college years, the two groups were compared. Over a million dollars was spent on that study, and there hasn't been one since that I know of, except maybe little fly-by-night affairs.

If the colleges could be persuaded to give high schools a free hand twenty or thirty years ago, they could be persuaded again. I am afraid that there's a good deal of buck-passing on this matter. High schools say, "We can't do anything because the colleges won't let us." The colleges complain, "We've got to have students who can write good English", and so on. So neither side really tries to break the impasse between the two groups. Perhaps this is an organization here that could begin to break that impasse again by setting up an experimental situation in which the colleges, wherever they are, would say, "Yes, we'll take your graduates no matter what you do at your high school because we have confidence in you and then see what happens." May I suggest that the time has come for a new Eight-Year Study?

Experiment on a Pilot Basis

The third suggestion I have to make is that, if we are to carry on experimental projects having to do with values, they have to be done on a pilot basis. Everybody knows that you can't change a whole curriculum all at once. What can be done, as many of you will surely testify from your own experience, is to effect a breakthrough on an experimental basis by saying, "Let's try it. If it works, we'll extend it. It will have an effect on many other schools. If it fails, well, we'll have learned by our mistakes too."

Let me give you an example of what I mean. Recently in one of the school systems near Boston, I was invited to speak before a large P.T.A. meeting at which was present the superintendent of schools, a representative of the Jewish organization, a Catholic representative, and two or three others. The topic of the discussion was "Shall we experiment with the study of religion in high school?" By experimenting with it was meant that we would set up a pilot project. We would try to inform the parents very carefully of what we were going to do. We would train the teachers in advance. We would try to have the teachers represent a cross-section of all the major religions in the community. We would have Buddhism represented and non-theistic religions, if not by teachers, then by films, by books, by field trips to various kinds of religious institutions, and, in the course of the project, we would be asking constantly, "What is the significance of the religious institution, the religious dimension of culture in the life of our time?" We would encourage the students to be critical. We would invite them, not to take a dogmatic position, but to compare religious institutions and values with each other and to let the chips fall where they might. At the end of the project, some of the students would perhaps have modified their religious views. Others might have their views reconfirmed.

This proposal was made before the parents at this meeting and I was, I must say, simply delighted to hear the superintendent of schools say, "It's time we did this. It's time we began to show that we mean it when we say that we want our children to grow up informed about all the great major problems of life." He said to the parents, "You're too afraid of these new things. Why don't you support us on this project?" And he reminded us that one trouble with teachers is that they aren't willing to stick their necks out often enough. He quoted that famous expression that teachers' colleges are places where education consists of the bland leading the bland. This conception was what the superintendent attacked. I was most interested to find that, as far as I could tell in that meeting, the parents were completely for it. But I am willing to give you odds that this pilot project will never happen.